



Foreign Agricultural Service

**GAIN Report**

Global Agriculture Information Network

Voluntary Report - public distribution

Date: 10/22/2002

GAIN Report #UK2024

## United Kingdom

## Grain and Feed

## Crop Update

## 2002

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### Report Highlights:

**Provisional UK June census data and cereal production estimates have now been released by the UK Government, putting the 2002 UK wheat harvest at 15.8 MMT and that for barley at 6 MMT, both below previous trade estimates. Autumn sowings for the 2003 harvest indicate a little changed wheat area and a decline in the barley area. That said, there is still scope for spring plantings to change the trends.**

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Includes PSD changes: No  
Includes Trade Matrix: No  
Unscheduled Report  
London [UK1], UK

On October 10, the UK Government's (HMG) Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) released its first provisional estimates of the 2002 cereal production harvest.

Defra puts the wheat planted area for the 2002 harvest at 1.989 million hectares, up 22 percent on the previous season but down on previous trade estimates. Using an average yield of just under 8 tons per hectare, Defra estimates the 2002 wheat harvest to be 15.814 MMT, 38 percent up on the previous season.

For barley, Defra estimates the winter barley area for the 2002 harvest was up 13 percent on the previous season at 524,000 hectares with production rising 22 percent to 3.287 MMT. Spring barley is the only cereal for which Defra sees a decrease in planted area and production for the 2002 harvest. Given the large area planted to spring barley in 2001, it is unsurprising that Defra puts the planted area down 31 percent at 542,000 hectares with production falling 33 percent to 2.689 MMT, giving a total barley harvest of 5.976 MMT.

This latest information will do little to change the overall dynamics of the wheat and barley balances this season, the former being dominated by a rise in supply of over 4.5 MMT, a substantial proportion of which will need to find a home on export markets, while the latter sees a circa 400,000 MT reduction in supply and a corresponding tightening of the overall balance.

With seed sale data now becoming available for 2002, attention is also turning to the prospects for the 2003 harvest. Despite a very dry September, drillings for winter wheat are not thought to have increased and trade sources are suggesting that the winter wheat acreage will be little different from last year. While the seed data does provide some information, increased use of farm-saved seed introduces a level of uncertainty. Estimates suggest that over half of last season's wheat crop was grown with such seed and, with incomes low, a similar scenario can be foreseen this season.

For barley, traders are suggesting the winter area could be down as much as 15 percent. A decline, however large, would meet with the long term downward trend in the sector which has seen the UK winter barley area steadily shrink since its most recent peak of 832,000 hectares in 1996/97.

Of course, whatever the case for the winter plantings of both crops, there is still much scope for spring plantings to introduce some unforeseen changes to the forecasts.